



# Press Release

**Congressman John Conyers, Jr.  
Michigan, 14<sup>th</sup> District**

**Ranking Member, U.S. House Judiciary Committee  
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus**

[www.house.gov/judiciary\\_democrats/index.html](http://www.house.gov/judiciary_democrats/index.html)

---

For Immediate Release:  
February 15, 2006

Contact: Jonathan Godfrey  
202-226-6888

## House Republicans Block Official Investigation into NSA Spying Program; Democrats Press Ahead with Inquiry

The House Judiciary Committee voted down a Resolution of Inquiry authored by Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (H. Res. 643) requesting that the Attorney General turn over copies of legal opinions and other documents concerning the NSA's warrantless surveillance program. The vote was a party line 21 - 16 vote, with only Rep. John Hostettler crossing party lines to support the Resolution. Immediately after the vote, Rep. Conyers released a letter signed by all 17 Democrats on the Committee reiterating their request for official hearings and submitting 45 questions to the Attorney General concerning the program.

At today's contentious committee meeting, which lasted more than two hours, the Republicans repeatedly asserted that the documents were not needed because Judiciary Chairman Sensenbrenner has unilaterally submitted 51 questions to the Attorney General, and that the Attorney General would testify at a general oversight hearing at some undetermined point in the future. Rep. Conyers and the other Democratic Members responded that this was wholly inadequate, and that to fulfill their constitutional oversight role the Committee needed to obtain documents from the Administration and hold separate hearings on the NSA issue. Conyers stated "Submitting 51 questions to the Attorney General – the first 38 of which merely ask the Department to restate their arguments that the NSA program is legal – is no substitute for oversight. It is time that Congress begins to serve as a genuine check and balance on the Administration. This is not a partisan issue, it's a constitutional issue."

Attached are copies of the questions submitted by the Judiciary Committee Democrats to the Attorney General, along with Rep. Conyers statement at the meeting. A video of the Judiciary Committee Meeting can be linked to at

<http://boss.streamos.com/real/hjudiciary/full/fullmk021506.smi>.